



READING IS MENTAL

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Besides exercising or visiting your aunt in Minnesota, is there anything that conjures up more excuses than choosing not to read? Over the years, as my career has grown and my family has grown and my responsibilities have grown (you get the picture), it's been easier to say no to reading. Reading—when it's done right—is a serious endeavor that requires concentration, focus, discipline (oh, excuse me, my six year old can't reach the cookies). See what I mean.

Whatever, your position or role and wherever you would like to take your career, I notice a striking similarity between the leaders I work with. Most if not all of them read regularly. That's it. They make the decision to make the time to read. Why?

Reading Is Fundamental

Reading, much like watching movies, has transportive powers. By applying a little pressure to your imagination button, reading enables you to see and go places you might never reach otherwise. You can envision how Churchill inspired his people at low moments. You can feel how Colonel Sanders, determined that he could earn more than his social security check was providing. Beyond the learning you experience, it's just plain old fun to read.

Reading Is Developmental

What are the top two areas of strength and the top two areas of improvement on your latest performance review? I'll bet you a cup of coffee that whatever is there is not new to mankind. I'll bet you that someone—somewhere has written a book about what you can do to improve. Simply put, reading is a great way to activate and fuel your personal and professional development.

Reading is Supplemental

Here's the good news about reading. You don't have to find all your growth and all your ideas through reading. It's just part of the equation for success. By adding a healthy reading habit to your other activities, you can consistently expand your horizons. In other words, don't feel that you have to keep up with anyone else's reading thirst or pace. Find a level of reading that supports the other activities you engage in for fun and for growth.

Reading is Monumental

I have an assignment for you. Select three leaders you know and admire. Ask them if there are any books that really had an amazing impact on them. I guarantee that at least two of them will identify one to three books that had a powerful influence on their philosophy and approach. Some books contain messages that truly change us and lead us to see the world differently. Today, I encourage you to take a small step to buy one book that positions you to grow!

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